

## **Timeline: Key Dates Highlighting Sen. Donnelly's Involvement in St. Joseph County VA Clinic**

- December 2007: Donnelly sent a [letter](#) to the Northern Indiana VA requesting utilization statistics to better understand how often, how far, and for what services South Bend-area veterans must travel. To read the letter, click [here](#) and the Northern Indiana VA's response [here](#).
- September 2008: Donnelly hosted a veterans' roundtable in South Bend to discuss expanding veterans' services in St. Joseph County. Then-Congressman Mike Michaud of Maine, who was Chairman of the Health Subcommittee of the Veterans' Affairs Committee participated in the roundtable.
- April 2009: Donnelly and then-Secretary Shinseki announced VA approval of an expanded Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) for the South Bend-area. The expanded South Bend-area CBOC would eventually be named the St. Joseph County VA Clinic.
- In 2011, the VA Clinic was authorized through the *Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act of 2011* in Congress with the support of Donnelly and it was later signed into law by President Obama.
- In addition in 2011, \$6.7 million was appropriated for the St. Joseph County VA Clinic through the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012*, which was passed by Congress, with Donnelly's support, and signed into law by President Obama.
- January 2012: Donnelly announced the appropriation of funds for the expanded South Bend-area CBOC (the eventual St. Joseph County VA Clinic) at a press conference in South Bend.
- Between February 2012 and February 2013, the VA ran a series of advertisements seeking proposed locations for the to-be-built clinic.
- April 2012: Donnelly participated in the opening of the interim, expanded South Bend-area existing CBOC near the then-Silverhawks' Coveleski Stadium in South Bend. The previously used 7,000 sq. ft. facility closes.
- April 2013: Initial offers were received. In "one-step" procurement, developers offered both a site and building design. Sites being offered were pre-approved by VA, and offers were evaluated based on both technical merit and price.
- September 2013: Multiple spots are considered as the location for the OutPatient Clinic (OPC). During the process of conforming to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office requested additional testing for archeological items be completed at all sites.

- March 2014: The South Bend-area CBOC required re-bids because it had been 6-8 months since the original bids were submitted. The VA said it needed updates to any changes to the cost estimates.
- June 2014: Donnelly spoke with Glenn Haggstrom, Principal Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction, at the VA to receive an update on the South Bend-area VA Clinic after the on-the-ground updates were proving insufficient and there had been no movement on the re-bidding process.
- July 2014: Donnelly met with VA Secretary nominee Bob McDonald on July 16, 2014, regarding Mr. McDonald's nomination and highlighted the South Bend-area VA Clinic delays.
- August 2014: The VA completed its bid refresh process and begins a 6-8 week technical review process in order to determine the bid winner and award the contract. However, delays persisted into 2015.
- May 2015: Donnelly spoke with Stella Fiotes, Executive Director of the VA's Construction and Facilities Management Office, regarding the delays and status of the VA Clinic. She committed to notifying Senate Veterans Affairs Committee (SVAC) and House Veteran Affairs Committee (HVAC) of the VA's intent to award a lease contract by June 20, 2015.
- June 2015: The VA notified Donnelly that it has picked the winner of the contract. Donnelly sent a [letter](#) to SVAC and HVAC requesting expedited consideration of the 30-day congressional review period of VA's notification of intent to award a lease contract.
- July 2015: The VA announced the awarding of the contract for the South Bend-area VA Clinic to Ambrose Property Group VA, LLC, of Indianapolis, notifying Donnelly on July 20, 2015.
- October 2015: Donnelly participated in the [official groundbreaking](#) of the St. Joseph County VA Clinic.
- November 2016: Donnelly urged Transpo and the VA of Northern Indiana Health Care System to work together to ensure South Bend and Mishawaka-area veterans are able to access reliable public transportation to the St. Joseph County VA Clinic when it opens. [He sent a letter asking Transpo and VA](#) to develop and implement a plan that will ensure all veterans live in the Transpo service area have access to care at the new facility beginning the first day it's open. [Donnelly also visited the construction site and spoke with leadership of VANIHCS](#) to get an update on the facility.
- January 2017: [Following Donnelly's request, Transpo and the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System announced](#) they will implement a public transit plan to provide veterans in the Transpo service area with access to the new St. Joseph County VA Clinic. Transpo pledged to operate a new bus route with hourly service Monday through Friday to the new health center.

- September 2017: [Donnelly and Transpo announced on September 7](#) that following the Senator's request, Transpo and the VA Northern Indiana Health Care System (VANIHCS) will begin operating a route with hourly bus service Monday through Friday from South Bend and Mishawaka to the new St. Joseph County VA Clinic beginning September 13. This means veterans and employees can access the center through public transit. The bus stop is located alongside Trinity Place near the main entrance of the health center.